here. I have fully told you all this. Now, O best brāhmaṇa, tell me what more you want to hear.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Kṛṣṇa's Love Sports in Vṛndāvana

Nārada said:

1. O lord, O great one, you have told me whatever I had asked (for). Now I desire to know the excellent path of devotion.

Śiva said:

2-11. O brāhmaṇa, you, desiring the well-being of all the worlds, have asked well. I shall tell you the secret also. Listen as I (shall) tell it to you. O greatest sage, the maid-servants, friends, parents and beloveds of Hari live here. All of them are eternal and virtuous. As they are described in the Purāṇas (indulging) in open sports, in the same way they remain in sports on the Vṛndāvana ground. They always go from the grove to the cow-pen and come back. They, along with their friends, also graze the cows without any harm from the demons. Similarly people dear to him are proud of those having water-pitchers (the ascetics). With secret devotion they delight their beloved persons. A man should there look upon himself among them as one who is charming, who is endowed with beauty and youth, who is a young woman, who has the form of a young beautiful woman, who knows many crafts and arts, who is fit for Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment, who is averse to enjoyment though solicited by Kṛṣṇa, who is the follower of Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā even more than Kṛṣṇa, who, through love, day by day brings about the union of the two (i.e. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā), who is extremely happy due to the pleasure and joy of serving them. Thus looking upon oneself, one

should, beginning with the early part of the day till late night, offer service there.

Nārada said:

12. I desire to hear correctly the everyday sport of Hari. How can I mentally serve Hari without knowing his sport?

Śiva said:

13-14. O Nārada, I do not correctly know that sport. From here go to Vṛndādevī. She will tell you the sport. She, the attendant of Govinda, surrounded by the group of her friends, lives near Keśītīrtha, not far from here.

Sūta said:

15-16. Then the best sage Nārada, who was addressed like this, went round him, and being delighted, saluted him again and again and went to Vṛndāvana. Vṛndā too, seeing Nārada, repeatedly saluted him and asked the greatest sage, "How have you come here (i.e. what brings you here)?"

Nārada said:

17. I desire to hear from you (about) the daily life of Hari. O auspicious one, if I am fit, then tell it (to me) from the beginning.

Vṛndā said:

18-30. O Nārada, I shall also tell you the secret (since) you are a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. You too are not to disclose this great secret which is a greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret). In Vṛndāvana which is charming and adorned with fifty bowers, in a chamber with divine gems, in an arbour of the desire-yielding tree, the two embracing each other remain (in a) sleeping (position), though later they are awakened by birds obeying my orders. They have obtained great joy due to a close embrace and are afraid of its being disturbed. They do not at all desire to get up from the bed. Then they have to get up from their bed when awakened with various notes made on all sides and repeatedly by groups of sārikās and parrots etc. Seeing them

seated gladly on the bed, the friends enter (the bower) and offer the two service appropriate for that time. Then the two, having got up from the bed by the notes of sārikās, overcome with eagerness go to their respective houses. In the morning, Kṛṣṇa, awakened by his mother, quickly gets up, and having with Baladeva brushed his teeth and being allowed by his mother, goes, being surrounded by his friends, to the cowstall. O brāhmaṇa, Rādhā too, awakened by her friends, gets up from her bed, and having brushed her teeth would then smear her body with unctuous substances. Then she goes to the quandrangular for bath. There she is bathed by her friends. (Then) she would go to the chamber for decoration, and there her friends decorate her with ornaments and various divine fragrant flowers and unguents. Then when, with effort, her friends request her mother-in-law she is invited along with her friends by Yaśodā to cook good food.

Nārada said:

31. How is it, O goddess, that she is invited by Yaśodā to cook food, when there are foremost cooks like Rohiṇī?

Vṛndā said:

32-43. I have formerly heard from the mouth of Kātyāyanī that in olden days she was granted a boon by Durvāsas, O great sage. (The boon was:) "O respectable lady, the food which is cooked by you, would be, as a result of my favour, sweet and vying with nectar, and would in the same way promote long life of the eater (of it)." Therefore, Yaśodā, loving her son, everyday calls her thinking, 'my son, due to longing for sweet (food), would, (after eating it) live a long life.' Allowed by her mother-in-law, she, being delighted, would go to the house of Nanda. Going there with the multitude of her friends she cooks there also. Kṛṣṇa also, having milked the cows and having some others got milked by (other) men, comes home surrounded by his friends at the words (i.e. order) of his father. Having smeared his body with unctuous substances and having had shampooing and after being gladly bathed by servants, he puts on washed garments, a garland, and has his body smeared with sandal. With his neck and forehead shining due to the hair on

his head separated and tied at two places, with the hair reddened by the dot on the forehead resembling the moon, and shining, with his hands delightfully glittering with jewelled bracelets, armlets, and bracelets worn on the upper arm, with his chest shining due to a pearl necklace, having put on ear-rings resembling crocodiles, he, holding the hand of his friend, and being followed by Baladeva, would enter the dining hall, after being again and again called by his mother. Then, surrounded by his friends and brother, making them laugh by means of (anecdotes etc. causing) laughter, and himself laughing with them, he eats various kinds of food. Having thus eaten (food), having sipped (water), having rested on a cot for a while, and distributing and chewing the tāmbūla given by the servants, Kṛṣṇa, having put on the dress of a cowherd, with the flock of cows going ahead of him, followed on the path by all the residents of Vraja with love, having saluted his father and mother, and having sent back properly the host (following him) with a glance, would go to the forest.

44-52. Having entered the forest and having played there with his friends for a while, he then gladly sports there, in the forest by means of various pastimes. Then, having deceived all, and surrounded by two or three friends, he, being eager to see his beloved, would gladly go to the rendezvous. She too, who had come home, on seeing Kṛṣṇa, goes, after deceiving her elders, under the pretext of Sun-worship etc. or for collecting flowers, to the forest with a desire to meet her lover. Thus the two, having, after many efforts, met in the forest, gladly sport there for the (whole) day with various pastimes. Sometimes the two get upon a swing and are rocked to and fro by their friends. Sometimes, Hari, deceived by the bevies of his beloveds, is seen, searching his flute dropped from his hand, and hidden by his beloved. He, made to laugh by them by means of merriment, remains there. At times the two enter the forest endowed with vernal breezes, and sprinkle each other with water (mixed with) sandal, or with water (mixed with) saffron etc., released from syringes, or smear each other with mud. In the same way, the friends also sprinkle them (with water etc.) and the two also sprinkle them.

53-59a. Then the two, O brāhmaṇa, being tired due to

many pastimes proper for the time in the groves endowed with vernal breezes on all sides, resort, with their attendants, to the root of a tree, and sitting on a divine seat, drink liquor, O best sage. Then the two, intoxicated due to the liquor, with their eyes closed due to sleep, holding each other's hands, being under the influence of Cupid's arrows, and desiring to sport, enter, with their words and mind stumbling on the path. There they sport like a female elephant and (the male elephant,) the lord of the herd. All the friends also, intoxicated by wine, and with their eyes troubled by sleep (i.e. drowsy) sleep all around in the charming bowers. Again and again incited by his beloved, Kṛṣṇa, the lord, would go near all, with a separate body (for each) and simultaneously. Having satisfied all of them as a lord of elephants satisfies the female elephants, he would, along with his beloved and with them, go to the lake to sport.

59b-69. Then the two, with their attendants, sport between themselves by sprinkling water (on each other). They are adorned with garments, garlands, sandal(-pastes), and also with divine ornaments. O sage, I have there, in a chamber full of divine gems, on the bank of the lake, already arranged fruits and roots. Hari, having eaten first, and being clasped by his beloved, and being served by two or three (maids) would go to a bed made of flowers. There, being served (by them) with tāmbūlas, fans and shampooing of his feet, he laughing with them, and remembering his beloved rejoices. Rādhikā too, when Hari is asleep, extremely delighted along with her attendants, having put her heart into him, eats what is left over (by him). Having but eaten a little there, she would go to the bed-chamber to see her lover's face as the female cakora bird sees the moon. The maids there have told (her) about his having chewed the tāmbūla. She also chews tāmbūlas and distributes them among her dear friends. Kṛṣṇa too, desiring to hear their free mutual talk, though sleepless, covers himself with a piece of cloth, appearing as if he is asleep. Those too, looking at one another in jest, and getting the hint from somewhere, biting their tongues with their teeth, look at one another's face. Merged as it were into the ocean of bashfulness, they do not say anything for a moment. Just after a moment, having removed the piece of

cloth from his body, and saying 'You were really asleep' they laugh and make him laugh.

70-75. Thus sporting with the attendants by means (of jokes etc. causing) laughter, and having, for a moment, experienced the pleasure of sleep, he sits upon the seat gladly spread by his attendants, and the two having mutually staked necklaces, kisses, embraces and garments, play with dice preceded by jocular talk. Though defeated by his beloved he, saying, 'I have won', proceeds to seize her necklace etc. and is beaten by her. Thus beaten by her on his lotus-like face with her hand Kṛṣṇa, being dejected in his mind, thinks of going. "If, O honourable lady, I am defeated, then accept what is staked (viz.) kisses etc. offered by me." On his saying so she would act like that to see the crookedness of his eyebrows and to hear his words of reproach.

76-80. Then having heard the mutual wordy fight among the sārikās and the parrots, they two, desiring to go home, move out from that place. Having allowed his beloved (to go), Kṛṣṇa would go to the cows. She, accompanied by the circle of her world goes to the Sun's abode (temple). Having gone a little away from there, Hari, again, returning, after having put on the dress of a brāhmaṇa, goes to the Sun's abode. Requested by her friends, he would worship the Sun there, with Vedas (hymns), containing jokes and composed then only. Then the clever ones, having recognised their lover who makes himself known, merge in the ocean of joy, and do not know themselves or other (persons).

81-91a. Having thus passed two watches and a half in various sports, they would go home, and Kṛṣṇa would go (to the place) of the cows. O sage, Kṛṣṇa, joining his friends, and taking the cows from all sides, comes playing upon the flute joyfully to Vraja. Then, all like Nanda and others, so also women and children, hearing the sound of Hari's flute, and also seeing the sky full of dust (raised) by the cows, give up all their jobs, and being eager to see Kṛṣṇa go towards him. Kṛṣṇa also, joining all the residents of Vraja, on the royal path, at Vraja-gate—wherever they are—(honours all) as before in due order—by means of seeing them, touching them, speaking to them, looking them with a smile, saluting with words and physically the old cowherds, and saluting his parents and Rohiṇī also (in such a way that) the eight parts (of the body touch the ground),

O Nārada, so also his beloved with a modest side glance. Thus very much and properly respected by the residents of Vraja, having sent the cows to the cowstall, he goes, after being requested by his parents to his abode with his brother. Having bathed there, having drunk (milk), having eaten a little, and being allowed by his mother, he, with a desire to milk the cows, again goes to the cowstall. Having milked them, and got them milked, having made some of them drink (water), he, being followed by hundreds of venerable men goes home with his father.

91b-101a. There with his father, paternal uncles, their sons, and Baladeva, he eats various kinds of foods like those that are chewed, those that are sucked etc. Even before he entertains a desire, Rādhikā, through her friends, would send dressed foods to his house. Hari, praising them, and eating them with his father etc. would, with the bards, go to the assembly hall. The friends (of Rādhā), that had come there having brought with them many foods, take (from his house) many kinds (of food) given by Yaśodā there and also whatever is left over by Kṛṣṇa. Having brought all that, they inform Rādhikā of it. She too, along with her group of friends, having eaten it in order and being decorated by her friends, would be (ready) to meet by appointment (her lover i.e. Kṛṣṇa). 'From here or there some friend is sent away by me'. Met by her, she, surrounded by her friends, and having put on a dress proper for white (i.e. bright) or black (i.e. dark) night goes to the chamber having divine jewels, near Yamunā. Kṛṣṇa also, seeing their curious things, then having heard delightful music from Kātyāyanī, and having properly pleased them with (gifts of) wealth and grains, and propitiated by people, goes with his mother to the house of his friend.

101b-106a. When his mother departs, he, having eaten, comes here—to the rendezvous—unnoticed and with his beloved. Both of them meet here and play in the groves of trees, with many sports, with Kṛṣṇa's dance with the cowherdess, accompanied with singing and instrumental music and laughter. Thus having spent two watches and a half of the night in sporting, the two desiring to sleep, enter, unnoticed by female birds, the bower. There, in the solitary place, the two sleep on a charming bed made of flowers and for sport, and are served by their

female friends. Thus I have told you the full daily life of Hari. O Nārada, even sinners are freed on hearing it.

Nārada said:

106b-107a. O goddess, I am blessed; I am favoured by you. There is no doubt about it, since today you have disclosed to me the delightful sport of Hari.

Sūta said:

107b-111a. Saying so, going round her, and honoured by her also, Nārada, the best sage, vanished, O brāhmaṇa. I too have told you all (the account) in due order. One should daily carefully mutter this couple of prayers. Formerly Rudra obtained it with effort from Kṛṣṇa's mouth. He told it to Nārada; and Nārada told it to me. Prescribing the sacred rites like this, I have told it to you. You too have to guard this very wonderful secret.

Śaunaka said:

111b-112a. O great one, I have been actually contented by your favour, since you disclosed to me the secret of secrets (i.e. the greatest secret).

Sūta said:

112b-117. Practising these modes, and muttering the hymn day and night, you will soon obtain the position of his attendant. There is no doubt about it. O brāhmaṇa, I too have to go to the eternal abode of the supreme lord of lords on the bank of Yamunā. Those men who, full of devotion, listen to this glorious and very pure account narrated by Maheśa, go to the eternal place of Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). It is excellent, it gives glory, promotes (long) life, health and gives desired success. It is the cause of the wealth in the form of heaven and salvation, and destroys sins. Those men, devoted to Viṣṇu, who everyday devoutly recite it, never come back from the heaven of Viṣṇu.